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AGO D/A ltr 29 Apr 1980; AGO D/A ltr 29 Apr 1980

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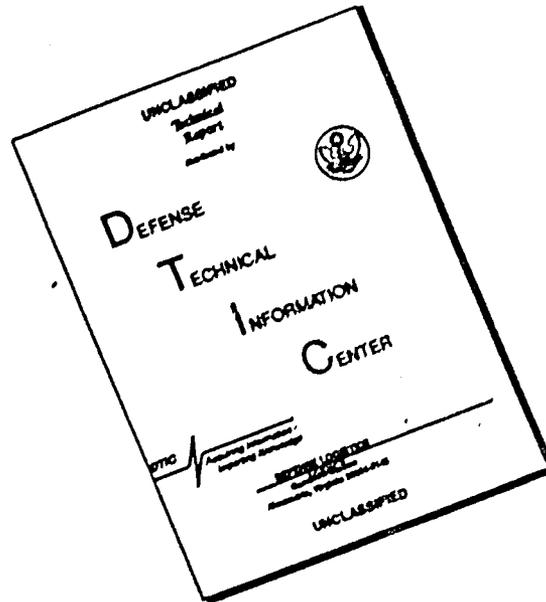
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310**



IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (18 June 68) FOR OT RD 68X024

21 June 1968

**SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - Operation FARGO, 11th Armored  
Cavalry Regiment, Period 21 December 1967 - 21 January 1968 (U)**

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1. Subject report is forwarded as inclosure for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15.
2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

**BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:**

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

**KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General**

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IN REPLY REFER TO  
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**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**HEADQUARTERS, 11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT**  
**APO SAN FRANCISCO 96257**

**5 May 1968**

**SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report**

**Commanding General**  
**II Field Force, Vietnam**  
**ATTN: AVFBC-RE-H**  
**APO 96266**

In accordance with USARV letter dated 15 March 1967,  
Operations After Action Report—Operation Fargo, is submitted.

**Combat**

**FOR THE COMMANDER:**

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen L. Pettit", is written over the typed name and title.

**STEPHEN L. PETTIT**  
**1LT. Armor**  
**Asst Adjutant**

**FOR OT RD**  
**68X024**

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1. (U) REFERENCES:

a. 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment OYORD 28-67 (Operation FARGO), 18 December 1967.

b. Maps, Vietnam, 1:50,000, Series L7014 and L7016, Sheets 6232 I, II; 6332 I, II, III, IV; 6333 II.

2. (U) TYPE OF OPERATION: FARGO was primarily a reconnaissance in force operation coupled with a secondary mission of road clearing and road security.

3. (U) DATES OF OPERATION: FARGO was conducted from 21 Dec 67 to 21 Jan 68.

4. (U) LOCATION: The general area of reconnaissance in force operations included the northern sector of Binh Long Province and the northeastern sector of Tay Ninh Province. Road clearing operations were conducted along National Highway 13 between An Loc (XT762907) and Loc Ninh (XU739098).

5. (U) CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment conducted Operation FARGO under the operational control of Headquarters, II Field Force, Vietnam.

6. (U) REPORTING OFFICER: The reporting officer for this report is Colonel Jack MacFarlane, Commanding Officer, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

7. (C) GENERAL: Operation FARGO was undertaken to counter increased enemy activity in the newly-formed Military Region 10 (Binh Long and Phuoc Long Provinces). The operation was initiated by the 1st and 2nd Squadrons and subsequently joined by the 3rd Squadron on 30 Dec 67. This was the first operation since its deployment to Vietnam in which the regiment was employed as a unit. The first reconnaissance in force operation was initiated on 26 Dec 67 by the 1st Squadron operating from Loc Ninh north along Highway 13 to the Cambodian border. Route flow clearing operations along Highway 13 from An Loc to Loc Ninh also began on 26 Dec 67 and continued until 12 Jan 68 when the mission was completed. The regiment continued to conduct reconnaissance in force operations until the termination of Operation FARGO on 21 Jan 68. (See Annex A - Task Organization)

8. (C) INTELLIGENCE: Operation FARGO carried the regiment deep into the newly-formed Military Region 10, comprised of Binh Long and Phuoc Long Province. In this region, the 5th and 9th Viet Cong Divisions and the 7th NVA Division were able to react to regimental operations.

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## b. Order of Battle:

(1) 5th Viet Cong Division: Hq 5th VC Div was located northeast of Bu Dop Village (XU9729) along the Cambodian border. The division was considered combat effective in personnel, equipment, and possibly training. Of the three subordinate regiments, the 88th NVA Regiment was in the same general area, while the 275th VC Regiment operated south of Song Be Village (YU1708). These subordinate units had sustained heavy casualties in actions near Song Be. However, by the start of Operation FARGO, these units had enjoyed sufficient time to retrain and regroup, especially in view of their proximity to the Cambodian infiltration routes. The 274th VC Regiment was operating on an independent mission in the Hat Dich Area (YT3006) and did not influence regimental operations.

(2) 9th Viet Cong Division: Hq 9th VC Div was located north to northeast of Loc Ninh Village along the Cambodian border. Its three subordinate regiments were just inside Cambodia in a posture that threatened the Bu Dop-Bo Duc area. The 9th VC Div was considered marginally combat effective following severe losses in defeats at Loc Ninh and Bu Dop in late October and early December. The ability of this division to quickly regroup was displayed by the New Year's Day attack on the US 25th Infantry Division Fire Support Base BURT (XT4980) near the Fish Hook Region, southwest of the Regimental Area of Operations. The Viet Cong attacked with elements of the 271st and 272nd VC Regiments, suffering a serious defeat as the infantrymen counted 382 Viet Cong bodies on the battlefield. This reversal reduced the possibility of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment engaging the 9th VC Div in a decisive action, as the enemy had been forced to withdraw and regroup.

(3) 7th NVA Division: Only the 165th NVA Regiment, located south of Chon Thanh Village (XT7762) astride National Highway 13, was immediately available for employment in Military Region 10. It was considered marginally combat effective following unsuccessful offenses along National Highway 13. The other subordinate units, the 101st NVA Regiment and the 241st NVA Regiment, were committed in the Michelin Rubber Plantation and northwestern War Zone C, respectively. Neither posed an imminent threat to Operation FARGO.

(4) The B525 Training/Replacement Division remained deep in Cambodia, west of Loc Ninh Village. The 76th Replacement Regiment (-) continued northeast of Loc Ninh Village, also in Cambodia.

(5) The An Loc Platoon and the Loc Ninh Platoon, both local guerrilla units which were regarded as combat effective, were available for activities near their villages and along National

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Highway 13.

## c. Intelligence Sources:

(1) Initial data on Operation FARGO was provided by liaison visits by regimental staff officers to Hq, II Field Force and Hq, 1st Infantry Division.

(2) Additional detailed intelligence was developed from information obtained from US Army Special Forces and ARVN sources permanently assigned to the area. A significant intelligence base was available at the conclusion of Operation FARGO, and the information was provided to the 1st Infantry Division in anticipation of their future operations in the region.

(3) Because of the heavy enemy concentration in the area, the E-63 Personnel Detector was used extensively to confirm possible enemy locations. Additionally, information from SLAR missions pointed toward enemy infiltration through the Fish Hook Region and the area northeast of Loc Ninh Village. Infra-red missions were largely inconclusive due to the various small fires which occurred.

(4) The Regimental Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol operated extensively, providing accurate indications of enemy activity. Additionally, their role in stay-behind ambush patrols was expanded with excellent results. (See Section 16. LESSONS LEARNED, Para b., (1).)

## d. Terrain and Weather:

(1) The terrain was generally suitable for large-scale armor movement. The primary restrictions were occasional steep gullies and dense jungle which required jungle-busting techniques.

(2) Dry season conditions continued throughout Operation FARGO. No rain was recorded and warm afternoon temperatures in the 90-degree range were common. Evening temperatures were very cool, often dropping into the high 50-degree range. Light winds out of the northeast were usually variable. Skies were clear with only occasional scattered clouds. Early morning patches of ground fog in the lowlands occasionally restricted local visibility.

## e. Enemy Reaction:

(1) Viet Cong reaction to Operation FARGO was unexpectedly light.

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(2) Scattered light contacts were a daily occurrence as previously safe enemy areas were entered. Individual and small unit harassing tactics with AT rockets and sniper fire prevailed.

(3) On 6 Jan, the regiment had its only major contact of the operation when the 2nd Battalion, 88th NVA Regiment, which had recently moved from the Bu Dop area, attempted to ambush H Company, 2nd Squadron, as that unit operated in the Fish Hook Region. (See Section 11. EXECUTION.)

(4) An intense small-unit encounter occurred on 9 Jan when L Troop, 3rd Squadron, on a reconnaissance in force mission in northern Tay Ninh Province, was attacked by an 18-man armor-killer team. (See Section 11. EXECUTION.)

e. Overlay Data: The following are locations of enemy units prior to Operation FARGO. Only those units considered a threat or available to support operations with the Regimental Area of Operations are listed:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
COSVN	XT1494
66th VC Guard Regt	XT1494
Hq 5th VC Div	YU2039
88th NVA Regt	YU2739
275th VC Regt	YU1702
Hq 7th NVA Div	XT5993
165th NVA Regt	XT7268
Hq 9th VC Div	XU8627
271st VC Regt	XU9728
272nd VC Regt	XU9825
273rd VC Regt	XU9729
Hq Military Region 10	YU4940
8525 Repl/Tng Div	XU4300
76th Repl Regt (-)	YU1232

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
85th Rear Svc Gp	Unlocated, possibly XU9314
86th Rear Svc Gp	YU2829

9. (C) MISSION: Commencing 21 Dec 67, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment was to conduct operations in the Quan Loi-Loc Ninh-Bu Dop area to destroy enemy main force units, primarily the 271st, 272nd, and 273rd Viet Cong Regiments, clear and secure National Highway 13 from An Loc to Loc Ninh, and prevent enemy infiltration into the area from Cambodia. The regiment was also to be prepared to counter any VC/NVA threat developing in the southwest Fish Hook (XT5895) and Tong Le Chen (XT622810) areas on orders from II Field Force.

10. (C) CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION:

a. Phase I: On 21 Dec 67, the 11th ACR minus the 3rd Squadron was to move from the vicinity of Lai Khe to An Loc. On 22 Dec it was to attack north to Loc Ninh and open and upgrade National Highway 13 to Grade 50. In addition, it was to conduct land clearing operations to a minimum of 100 meters on each side of Highway 13 from the bridge in vicinity XT722973 to Loc Ninh to permit movement of a heavy artillery battery and engineer equipment to Loc Ninh. It was also to provide security for engineer construction of Fire Support Base Harry (XU730085) in vicinity Loc Ninh until 042400H Jan 68. On orders the 3rd Squadron was to move from Blackhorse Base Camp to join the regiment in the Loc Ninh area.

b. Phase II: On order, the regiment was to attack along the Loc Ninh-Bu Dop axis, destroy Viet Cong and NVA forces in the area of operations, and open Highway 14A between Loc Ninh and Bu Dop.

c. Phase III: On order the regiment was to conduct reconnaissance in force operations in the area of operations to destroy VC/NVA forces and establish security positions to block infiltration from Cambodia during TET in coordination with the 101st Airborne Division.

d. Throughout the operation, on order from II Field Force, the regiment was to be prepared to counter VC/NVA threats developing in the southwest area of operations in the vicinity of the Fish Hook/Tong Le Chen Regions.

11. (C) EXECUTION: Operation FARGO was initiated on 21 Dec 67 when the 1st and 2nd Squadrons of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment displaced from the Ban Cat-Phuoc Vinh area (location of Operation QUICKSILVER) to the FARGO Area of Operations (see Annex B, Op-

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erations Overlay). The 1st Squadron attacked into AO Bengal, north of An Loc, 220645H Dec to establish laager positions Alpha (XT717-978) and Bravo (XT720997), Fire Support Base Tom (XU725016) and to support 2nd Squadron's AO Battle north of AO Bengal. The 2nd Squadron moved through AO Bengal to secure Fire Support Base Harry (XU730-085) in the vicinity of Loc Ninh and to establish Fire Support Base Dick (XU7406). Objectives for this phase of the operation (22 - 26 Dec) were the security of National Highway 13 in the squadron's AO's, the construction of three fire support bases (Tom, Dick, and Harry), and the construction of Forward Supply Area and the Regimental Command Post at Loc Ninh (XU739098).

The Christmas Holiday Truce took place from 241800H Dec to 251800H Dec. There were two minor incidents during this period. A listening post from B Troop observed two Viet Cong approaching its position at 250200H Dec and took them under fire. At 250800H Dec an OH-23G in which the 1st Squadron Commander was making a reconnaissance near the Cambodian border received automatic weapons fire.

On 26 Dec Rome Flow operations were begun by the 168th Engineer Company (coordinated by the CO, 919th Engineer Company) to clear the jungle to a distance of 100 meters on both sides of Highway 13 from XT762907 (vicinity An Loc) to XU743073 (vicinity Loc Ninh) and continued until 12 Jan 68 when the operation was completed. During the period of the operation, the engineer work teams cleared 950 acres of light to heavy jungle, thereby virtually eliminating Viet Cong tax collection points and ambush sites along this portion of Highway 13. (See Section 12, Supporting Forces, Engineer.)

Also on 26 Dec the 1st Squadron minus A Troop moved north of Loc Ninh along Highway 13 to the Cambodian border to conduct the first reconnaissance in force operation of Operation FARGO. A Troop remained behind to secure AO Bengal and was replaced by G Troop, 2nd Squadron, OPCON to the 1st Squadron for the duration of the mission. At 1300 hours, Engineer Support Base Bill (XU706178) was established, and all maneuver elements were deployed in AO Caprice. Operations were conducted along Highway 13 to the Cambodian border, but no enemy contact was made. At 271400H Dec, the mission was terminated without incident and by 1600 hours all elements had returned to AO Bengal. Upon arriving at Loc Ninh, G Troop reverted to the control of the 2nd Squadron, and A Troop returned to 1st Squadron control.

The 2nd Squadron conducted an extensive reconnaissance in force operation during 29-30 Dec in the area northeast of Loc Ninh, but the enemy avoided all contact with the squadron.

On 30 Dec the 3rd Squadron departed Blackhorse Base Camp to join the regiment in Operation FARGO and established a fire support

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base northwest of Loc Ninh along Highway 14A (XU739098). From this location, the squadron conducted local reconnaissance in force operations during the period 1-5 Jan 68. Light contact was made on several occasions with enemy RPG teams, possibly operating in conjunction with a tax collection point.

In January the 1st Squadron continued its mission of securing the Regimental Command Post, the Forward Supply Area, the Rome Plow teams clearing Highway 13, and the logistical convoys between Loc Ninh and An Loc. In addition, troop-size reconnaissance in force operations were conducted daily during the period 6-11 Jan by B Troop and D Company, resulting in the discovery and destruction of numerous enemy bunkers in the vicinity of XU765138 and XT708079.

On 6 Jan the only major contact of the operation occurred when the 2nd Squadron was ambushed by the 2nd Battalion, 88th NVA Regiment, in the dense jungle of the Fish Hook Region (XT5895), southwest of the Blackhorse AO. At 0608 hours, an advance element of the enemy force attacked prematurely, and led H Company to believe initially that they had contact with only an enemy squad. An NVN soldier captured after the battle revealed that his superiors had told him the ambush would be directed against a truck convoy. Undoubtedly surprised by the unexpectedly heavy return fire which the tanks delivered, the North Vietnamese soldiers retreated from their bunkers along the entire length of their ambush position. H Company pursued, but its maneuverability was severely restricted by the thick vegetation in the area. Heavy ground contact continued until 1030 hours when H Company withdrew to allow close air support and artillery fires to be brought to bear upon the enemy's positions. Seven airstrikes were made, employing napalm, high explosive bombs, and 20mm cannon fire. Helicopter gunships also assaulted enemy locations. E Troop was then moved into the area and after dismounting, it participated in a combined tank-infantry sweep of the area with H Company. This maneuver succeeded in routing any remaining enemy elements. The ensuing pursuit, however, failed to regain contact with the enemy, and air strikes and artillery were called in on suspected enemy withdrawal routes. A subsequent search of the area revealed that 40 enemy had been killed (body count). One prisoner of war was taken. US losses were three killed and six wounded. In addition, three AX-47, one RPG-7, and eight RPG-7 rounds were captured. 20 enemy bunkers were discovered and destroyed at the ambush site.

On 6 Jan the 3rd Squadron moved southeast along Highway 246 to the vicinity of the Special Forces Camp at Tong Lo Chon (XT622-810). The squadron established a fire support base and initiated reconnaissance in force operations in northern Tay Ninh Province.

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On 9 Jan, while operating south of the Fish Hook Region (XT5895), the 3rd Squadron, 11th ACR, had contacts with several three-man armor-killer teams from the 271st VC Regiment. The enemy achieved moderate success as the US losses were six WHA and one tank damaged. The enemy force suffered no known casualties. The dense jungle enabled the enemy to achieve surprise and severely hampered effective engagement and pursuit by the squadron. A Hoi Chanh who was involved in this action stated that he was one of 18 enemy soldiers who left their base camp in Cambodia every morning in six three-man RPG-7 armor-killer teams and moved south into the squadron's AO. He further stated that a team consisted of one runner armed with the new RPG-7 (Rocket Propelled Grenade) and two ammunition bearers carrying three rockets each and armed with AK47. The mission of each team was to destroy one armored vehicle and then return to base areas within the Fish Hook Region across the Cambodian border.

On 10 Jan the 3rd Squadron became OPCON to the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, and participated in Operation YELLOWSTONE, conducted west of the Fish Hook Region in Tay Ninh Province. The squadron, operating with the 2nd Battalion, 22nd Mechanized Infantry, performed reconnaissance in force operations in this area with only light contact limited to mining and armor-killer team attacks. On 13 Jan the 3rd Squadron reverted to regimental control.

The 3rd Squadron moved from Tong Lo Chen on 14 Jan and established defensive positions along Highway 13 in the Loc Ninh area. The 3rd Squadron also assumed the duties previously assigned to the 1st Squadron of securing the Regimental Command Post and Forward Supply Area and providing escort for the logistical convoys between An Loc and Loc Ninh. It continued these missions until 21 Jan when Operation FARGO was terminated.

On 14 Jan the 1st Squadron moved northeast on Route 14A toward Bu Dop under OPCON FARGO LINCOLN. While moving toward Fire Support Base Knife (XU884185), D Company captured two Viet Cong in vicinity XU875185. B Troop and D Company established Fire Support Base Knife and A Troop and C Troop occupied Fire Support Base Sleeper (XU800125). During subsequent reconnaissance in force operations in vicinity Fire Support Base Knife, D Company made two contacts with small Viet Cong patrols, killing one enemy soldier. Three days later, a Viet Cong believed to have been wounded in one of the fights rallied to B Troop.

A Troop, searching in vicinity XU850155 where one of its ACAV's had been struck by an RPG round, located a recently occupied battalion-size base camp. Captured material was evacuated, and the camp was destroyed.

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On 17 Jan the 1st Squadron minus B Troop and D Company at Fire Support Base Knife, moved from Fire Support Base Sleeper. Howitzer Battery moved into Fire Support Base Knife while the rest of the squadron continued to Fire Support Base Sharp (XU854153). Reconnaissance in force operations were conducted from these fire support bases until 19 Jan when the entire squadron was consolidated at Fire Support Base Sleeper for a two-day maintenance period in preparation for future operations and the AGI/CMI to be held in February.

On 21 Jan the 2nd Squadron terminated Operation FARGO and moved into attack positions along Highway 13 to join the 101st Airborne in Operation ATTALA/CASEY.

12. (C) SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. Artillery

(1) Artillery units firing in support of the regiment during Operation FARGO were the organic howitzer batteries; A Battery, 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery; and C Battery, 6th Battalion, 27th Artillery. The two batteries from the 27th Artillery were assigned the mission of general support to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment by II Field Force Artillery. Each was a composite 175mm/8" battery and could cover the regiment's operations to within 2000 meters of the Cambodian border. Also under regimental operational control was one platoon of M42's (twin 40mm dusters) of A Battery, 5th Battalion, 2nd Artillery, one searchlight platoon (four lights) of I Battery, 29th Artillery, and a section of M55's (four cal. .50 machineguns) of D Battery, 71st Artillery (AD). These elements were integrated into the perimeter defense plan for the Loc Ninh area and the Regimental Forward Support area, in the vicinity of the Loc Ninh airstrip.

(2) The types of artillery fires employed during FARGO were:

- (a) Defensive concentrations
- (b) Observer-adjusted missions
- (c) Harassment and interdiction
- (d) Navigational
- (e) Preparations
- (f) Pre-planned fires on call

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(3) The following Fire Support Bases were used by supporting artillery units during FARGO:

- |                        |                  |
|------------------------|------------------|
| (a) FSB Tom (XU7201)   | How Btry 1/11    |
| (b) FSB Dick (XU7406)  | How Btry 2/11    |
| (c) FSB Harry (XU7307) | C Btry 6/27 Arty |
| (d) FSB Pat (XT6899)   | How Btry 2/11    |
| (e) FSB Sam (XU7912)   | How Btry 3/11    |
| (f) An Loc (XT7899)    | A Btry 6/27 Arty |

(4) Each of the above FSB locations was within range of at least one of the other FSB locations and within range of the Composite General Support Battery at Quan Loi. This positioning insured maximum artillery support. Artillery fires were available throughout the Regimental AO and were immediately on call during each of the squadrons' reconnaissance in force operations. Another factor enhancing the effectiveness of the artillery support was the O-1 aircraft provided daily by II Field Force for an aerial artillery observer. This air observer was available for all convoy moves as well as during tactical operations. By use of this aircraft, observed artillery fires could be utilized for precision fire or follow-up of intelligence reports as required.

(5) New Techniques: During Operation FARGO, each time a fire support base was vacated, fires were scheduled on that location and incorporated as H&I fires. Also, at varying times throughout the night, massed fires would be delivered on the vacant FSB. Previous experience showed that the Viet Cong dug up vacated FSB for items of use to them or emplaced mines to harass returning artillery units. Incorporating these locations in the H&I fires and keeping them under surveillance reduced Viet Cong access to these areas.

b. Engineer

(1) Direct engineer support was provided by the 919th Engineer Company (Armored). Initially, the 1st Platoon, 919th Engineers, provided support to the 1st Squadron, and the 3rd Platoon supported the 2nd Squadron. When the 3rd Squadron joined the operation on 30 Dec, the 2nd Platoon provided it with direct support. Throughout the operation, the company command post was located with the Regimental Command Post.

(2) During the first phase of the operation, the 919th

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Engineer Company was charged with coordination of the route clearing mission along National Highway 13 from XT762907 to XU743073. A team of 8 Rome Plows was organized and assigned as follows:

ROME FLOWS:	UNIT:
1	919th Engineer Company (Armored)
4	9th Infantry Division
2	557th Light Equipment Company
1	Hq Company, 168th Engineer Battalion (C)

(3) The company was also charged with the responsibility of constructing defensive bunkers and aircraft revetments in the Forward Support Area at Loc Ninh. This platoon-sized mission was rotated among the three platoons selected as the tactical situation permitted. To satisfy the immediate need for helicopter revetments, 700 empty 55 gallon POL drums were transported from Quan Loi to the Forward Support Area. Elements of the company constructed two fixed-wing revetments and six UH-1 revetments. Two of the UH-1 revetments were constructed using M-8 matting.

(4) The company also conducted jungle clearing operations to provide suitable areas for landing zones and command posts. In addition to the land clearing operations, the company dug emplacements for vehicles and constructed berms around the command post locations using its organic tank-dozers and bulldozer.

(5) One laterite borrow pit was developed at XU727029 for the purpose of filling 55-gallon drums to be used in aircraft revetments and for general fortification work. 10,000 cubic yards of fill were provided from this pit, which was completely stripped at the termination of the operation.

(6) During the continuing mine sweeping operations, elements of the 919th Engineers detected and destroyed five antitank mines and evacuated one antitank mine (M1A1) for evaluation. The company lost one M48A3 Tank-dozer due to mine damage when the tank struck an estimated 35-pound mine at XT57C843.

**c. Chemical:**

(1) E-63 Personnel Detector Missions: The 33rd Chemical Detachment conducted almost daily personnel detector missions over suspected enemy base camp sites and infiltration routes along the Cambodian border.

(2) Riot Control Agent (CS) Operations: On 20 Jan 68 ten E-158 CS Cluster Bombs were dropped from a UH-1D on a suspected enemy force discovered by a personnel detector mission which immediately preceded it. Following the CS drop, artillery was fired into the area with unknown results.

d. Army Aviation:

(1) General: The aviation elements supported the regiment with (16) OH-23G, (12) UH-1D, and 19 UH-1C. The OH-23G were flown a total of 747 hours, consumed 13,446 gallons of 115/145 fuel, and transported 1,048 passengers. The UH-1C armed helicopters flew 657 hours, consumed 36,135 gallons of JP-4 fuel, and fired 235,075 rounds of 7.62mm, 968 rounds of 2.75 inch, and 1,291 rounds of 40mm. Three structures were destroyed. The UH-1D helicopters flew 634 hours, consumed 37,540 gallons of JP-4 fuel, transported 3,878 passengers and carried 38 tons of cargo (1.26 tons per day).

(2) Employment:

		<u>Number of Sorties</u>		
	<u>Command &amp; Control</u>	<u>Recon</u>	<u>Administrative</u>	<u>Aerial Support &amp; Reaction Force</u>
OH-23G	1,545	27	298	
UH-1C		16		760
UH-1D	215	38	1,250	
	<u>Troop Lift</u>	<u>Cargo Lift</u>	<u>Casualty Evacuation</u>	
	385	96	0	
<u>Total Sorties</u>	4,630			

(3) Maintenance:

	<u>On Hand</u>	<u>Available</u>
OH-23G	16	11.8
UH-1C	12	9.5
UH-1D	19	15.3

e. Air Force

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(1) The Regimental Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) was located with the Regimental Command Post throughout the operation. Aircraft were flown out of Loc Ninh during the day with an aircraft on night alert also at Loc Ninh. Operations at Loc Ninh were made feasible by transporting a fuel pump from Bien Hoa Air Base and by construction of revetments on the airfield.

(2) While at Loc Ninh, the radio mount from an M108 jeep was installed in the S-3 Air track. This gave better reception/transmission power on all radios in addition to giving greater protection to the radios and operator.

(3) Sorties Flown:

O-1	122
F-100	144
F-4C	18
B-57	2
A-37	17

(4) Ordnance Expended: (in rounds)

LAU-27	260
MK-82	291
MK-81	12
MK-117	133
CBU	6
Rockets	16
Caliber .50	1600
20mm	649,200
7.62mm	57,800

(5) Bomb Damage Assessment:

Bunkers Destroyed	88
Damaged	6

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Uncovered	1
Trenches Destroyed	25
Uncovered	30
Trails Uncovered	85
Structures Destroyed	7
Damaged	1
Foxholes Destroyed	10
Uncovered	2

f. Civic Affairs/Psychological Warfare: The Civic Affairs efforts were directed at coordinating road-clearing operations along Highway 13, rapid processing of incidents with Vietnamese civilians, and repairing damage done to civilian property. Before the operation began, it was decided that road clearing operations in the Regimental Command Post and Forward Support Area locations would not be coordinated until the regiment arrived in the area of operations. This was done in order to disguise the timing and nature of Operation FARGO. The Psychological Warfare effort consisted of a Chieu Hoi campaign, a reward campaign, rapid reaction to intelligence, and a special effort devoted to familiarizing the population in the FARGO Area of Operations with the purpose of the operation.

(1) Civic Affairs:

(a) Two problems developed in this area. The province chief of Long Binh Province did not want rubber trees cut along the roads, and the management of the GERO Plantation in Loc Ninh was displeased with the presence of the regiment in the area. The resolution of these difficulties, particularly those with the plantation owner occupied considerable time from 22 Dec 67 to 15 Jan 68.

(b) The resistance of the province chief was overcome when Lt. General Weyant, Commanding General, II Field Force, convinced the III Corps Commander that rubber trees should be cut when there was a definite tactical need to do so.

(c) The plantation management was concerned for several reasons. First, they did not like the regiment's occupation of plantation land along the airstrip. Second, they felt that their own security was threatened by the presence of tactical units which might invite Viet Cong attacks. Third, they feared that the regiment's

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eventual departure would lead to reprisals. The management therefore requested that the regiment either re-locate its Command Post or include the homes of the management inside its perimeter. Since the airfield was necessary for operations and logistical support, the first request could not be granted. The second request, if granted, would have required tying additional combat elements to a static defense mission; therefore, it was also denied. Despite this and the cutting of rubber trees along the airfield, the plantation management cooperated by offering a water point and pump for the regiment's use and by providing general intelligence of the area.

(d) Civic action was limited primarily by the location and missions of the squadrons during the operation. 450 pounds of food were distributed in the Loc Ninh area, and the North and South Gates of the village were repaired after they were damaged by track vehicles. Finally, one MEDCAP was conducted, and 33 people were treated.

(2) Psychological Warfare:

(a) 31 aerial leaflet missions were flown in support of Operation FARGO, dropping a total of 1,703,300 leaflets. 27 aerial loudspeaker missions were flown, totaling 19 hours, 45 minutes of broadcast time. This effort was equally divided between a pre-Tet Chicou Hoi campaign and a reward for information campaign.

(b) There was little response from the Vietnamese people in the area of operations. They were not unfriendly but were reserved. This was the first time that a US tactical unit had remained in the area for any length of time. There was no response at all to the reward for information campaign.

(c) Three Hoi Chanhs came to the regiment during Operation FARGO. One of them had a foot blown off which accounts for his rallying, yet there was an unusually high number of returnees for such a short period. Until the regiment arrived, no concentrated PSYOPS had been conducted in the area, and little of what had been done was in conjunction with tactical operations. This may account for the two unwounded Hoi Chanhs. A tape recording of each of these returnees was made for immediate PSYOPS loudspeaker exploitation.

13. (C) RESULTS:

Friendly Losses

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Personnel:	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>				
	13	79				
Equipment:	<u>Damaged</u>					
	<u>M48A3</u>	<u>ACAV</u>		<u>Tank-Doner</u>		
	2	2		1		
	<u>Destroyed</u>					
	<u>M48A3</u>	<u>ACAV</u>				
	2	9				
	<u>Enemy Losses</u>					
Personnel:	<u>KIA (BC)</u>	<u>KIA (Poss)</u>	<u>POW</u>	<u>Hoi Chanhs</u>	<u>Detainees</u>	
	49	22	3	3	23	
Fortifications:	<u>Bunkers</u>	<u>Foxholes</u>	<u>Huts</u>	<u>Base Camps</u>		
	661	458	8	14		
Equipment:	<u>Duds</u>	<u>Mines</u>	<u>AK-47</u>	<u>RPG-2 Rds</u>	<u>RPG-3 Rds</u>	<u>RPG-7 Launcher</u>
	6	8	5	4	1	1
	<u>RPG-7 Rds</u>	<u>Gren Launcher</u>	<u>Gren</u>	<u>Mort Rds</u>	<u>Doc(in lbs)</u>	<u>Med Supl(in lbs)</u>
	7	2	23	8	39	2
	<u>Clothing(in lbs)</u>	<u>Bombs</u>	<u>Tobacco(in lbs)</u>			
	100	3	122			
Foodstuffs(in pounds):		<u>Rice</u>	<u>Sugar</u>	<u>Candy</u>		
		2543	1200	200		

14. (FOUO) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Logistical Support:

(1) During Operation FARGO, the regiment was supported logistically from a Forward Support Area (FSA Lewis) established by the Saigon Support Command. FSA Lewis was formed at An Loc on 23

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Dec 67, moved to Loc Ninh on 24 and 25 Dec 67 and was actively supporting the regiment by 26 Dec 67.

(2) The USA provided Class I, III, and IV, and limited Class IV supplies, including engineer items and barrier materials. Maintenance support by the 551st Light Maintenance Company, a laundry and bath platoon, and a graves registration section constituted the remaining support provided by FSA Lewis.

(3) FSA Lewis was stocked by the 29th General Support Group utilizing logistical convoys originating in the Long Binh area. The convoy schedule provided for two northbound and two southbound convoys during a five-day period.

(4) The support rendered by FSA Lewis proved to be adequate to supply the regiment. Only two exceptions were noteworthy. A critical shortage of 30-weight oil developed and required a week to rectify. The refilling of expended vehicle fire extinguishers was a problem throughout the operation.

(5) Logistical convoys were utilized by the squadrons as the principal means of resupply. Convoy movement within the regiment was controlled by the regimental S-4. Convoys moving south of An Loc were coordinated with the 1st Division Transportation Officer.

(6) CH-47 sorties were used whenever, due to the tactical situation, it became impractical or impossible to resupply by convoy. A total of 377 sorties were flown in support of Operation FARGO. A breakdown of sorties by squadron follows:

1st Squadron - 128

2nd Squadron - 91

3rd Squadron - 158

(7) Three 1,500 and one 3,000 gallon-per-hour aerolators provided water for the regiment. Average water consumption was 22,000 gallons daily.

(8) Class III and V consumption totals for Operation FARGO follow:

(a) Class III

Diesel 231,000 gallons

Kerosene 69,000 gallons

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## (b) Class V

Ctg 5.56mm	294,300 rds
Ctg 7.62mm	2,303,700 rds
Ctg Cal. .45	52,800 rds
Ctg Cal .50	4,52,640 rds
40mm HE	18,690 rds
40mm HE Linked	3,840 rds
4.2 in HE	12,540 rds
4.2 in Illum	180 rds
4.2 in WP	1,140 rds
90mm HE	150 rds
90mm Canister	1,380 rds
155mm HE	7,320 rds
155mm Illum	510 rds
2.75 in Rocket HE	120 rds
Hand Gren, Frag	1,740 rds
Hand Gren, Smk, All Colors	2,340 rds
Mino, Claymore	720 ea
Flare, Trip	3,600 ea
Charge, Demol CL	4,200 ea
Cord, Det	67,200 ft

(9) Problem Areas: From the beginning of this operation until the first week of Jan the water supply system proved to be unreliable, due to repeated radiator breakdowns. During this period, it became necessary to dispatch frequent convoys to Guan Loi, the nearest alternate source of potable water.

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b. Signal:

(1) The initial planning for the operation was conducted on a short notice basis. All of the initial planning and coordination was accomplished in two days; however, the communications for Operation FANGO were better than those of previous operations.

(2) Communications to Higher Headquarters

(a) FM-AM automatic retransmission unit on the II Field Force Command Net was established by 53rd Signal Battalion on Hill 837.

(b) AM-SSB - AN/GRC 106 was provided by 53rd Signal Battalion for regimental use in the II Field Force SSB Command Net.

(c) AM-RTT - AN/GRC 26 D was provided by 53rd Signal Battalion for RTT communications in the II Field Force Command Net RTT.

(d) Land-line 2MRC-73 12-channel VHF systems and 2MRC-112 4-channel systems were provided by 53rd Signal Battalion. A MGC-17 land-line commensurator from the 53rd Signal Battalion provided land-line teletype communication. Land-line telephone communications with II Field Force were maintained on the VHF systems.

(3) Communications from Regimental Field Location to Base Camp:

(a) The distance from Loc Ninh to Blackhorse Base Camp precluded effective FM communications. No base station was set up at Blackhorse since there were no tactical units of the regiment at that location.

(b) AM-RTT communications were maintained on the Regimental Command/Intelligence Net. The organic AN/VRC 29 provided sufficient 24-hour communication with the base camp.

(c) Two VHF land-line circuits provided telephone communications with the base camp.

(4) Special Equipment and Techniques: An 82-foot telephone pole was provided by the 1st Signal Brigade for use with the VHF antenna on the shot to Hill 837. This pole provided the necessary height to get a clear shot over the rubber trees in the Regimental Command Post area.

## (5) Radio Nets and Telephone-Teletype Circuits Used:

## (a) Radio Nets:

1 FM nets as specified in the 11th ACR SOI were utilized.

2 AM-RATT communications on the Regimental Command/Intelligence Net RATT and the II Field Force Operations Net.

## (b) Telephone Circuits:

1 Internal shared trunk circuits were established within the Regimental Command Post area in accordance with Field SOP. In addition, an FSA switchboard was established. Shared trunk circuits outside the Regimental Command Post and Forward Supply Area included Quan Loi, II Field Force TOC, Long Giao, and the Special Forces Camp at Loc Ninh.

2 Three dedicated circuits were established between the Regimental TOC and the II Field Force switchboard. In addition, dedicated circuits for coordination purposes were established with the 5th AAVN Division, the 1st Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division, the 1st Division Artillery at Quan Loi, and the Air Cavalry Troop of the 11th ACR at Lai Khe.

3 As in previous operations an excessive amount of time was needed to establish telephone circuits external to the Command Post.

(c) A direct tactical teletype circuit was established between the Regimental TOC and II Field Force.

## c. Personnel and Administration

(1) Administrative operations continued in a normal manner. A message center was established in the forward area for distribution of reports and messages to forward units. Courier service was established on a twice-daily basis between base camp and the forward area. Casualty and strength reports for units in the field were sent by radio to the Forward Command Post and forwarded to base camp by telephone. Casualty reports were then telephoned to USARV from the base camp.

## (2) Casualties:

KIA

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WIA	79
Non-Battle Dead	2
Injuries	19

(3) Personnel Services:

(a) Religious:

Catholic

	<u>Services</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Field	68	547

Protestant

	<u>Services</u>	<u>Attendance</u>
Field	43	483

(b) Red Cross Clubmobile: The Clubmobile made visits to the 24th and 93rd Evacuation Hospitals in Long Binh.

(4) Discipline, Law, and Order: There were four serious incidents during Operation FARGO. There were three vehicle accidents and one accidental shooting.

(5) Awards and Decorations: The following awards were processed for Operation FARGO:

Silver Star	5
Bronze Star "V"	28
Air Medal "V"	4
ACM "V"	9

15. (c) COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS: Operation FARGO achieved success in countering an increase in enemy activity in the newly-formed Military Region 10. Presumably because of the presence of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment--the 5th and 9th Viet Cong Divisions abstained from infiltrating large forces into the area of operations with one exception. On 6 Jan, the 2nd Battalion, 88th NVA Regiment, operating with the 5th Viet Cong Division, ambushed H Company of the 2nd Squadron. The enemy lost 40 men in the battle which followed. Following this abortive attempt, the major

enemy units remained encamped in sanctuaries across the Cambodian border and limited their operations to dispatching armor-killer teams of three men each on a daily basis. As a result of this harassment, there was an increase in the number of enemy contacts after 6 Jan, but none of them was major in nature.

The regiment also accomplished its mission of clearing 100 meters of jungle from the sides of National Highway 13 between An Loc and Loc Ninh. The security of this portion of the road was greatly improved as a result of Operation FARGO.

16. (C) LESSONS LEARNED:

a. Operations:

(1) Item: Combined armor and infantry operations in the jungle.

Discussion: When operating in heavy jungle, infantry must be cross-attached to armor units. Throughout the 3rd Squadron's operations along Highway 13 and in the Fish Hook Region, the need for dismounted infantry was quite apparent. The thick jungle made the tanks extremely vulnerable to armor-killer teams. Throughout these actions the RPG fire was directed from ranges of less than 25 feet.

Observation: Dismounted infantry should be used to provide armored vehicles with the necessary security to allow them to work in heavily vegetated areas. CIDG forces were used as dismounted infantry while working in the Fish Hook Region; however, they were not accustomed to working with cavalry and the language barrier was a problem.

(2) Item: VC/NVA mine activity in northeastern Tay Ninh Province.

Discussion: The 3rd Squadron encountered 15 AT mines in northeastern Tay Ninh Province. These mines were both along Highway 246 as well as in the jungle area north of the highway. The mines appeared to have been laid on routes used by tracked vehicles in the past. They were also laid in old fire support bases and landing zones.

Observation: The squadron avoided the use of all old roads and trails after making this observation. In addition, they did not use any old fire support bases.

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b. Ambush Patrols

- (1) Item: LRRP stay-behind ambush patrols.

Discussion: The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment LRRP proved very successful in a stay-behind ambush patrol role. This unit was employed three times in this type of mission, twice gaining contact and killing a total of three Viet Cong. The most effective technique was to deploy the LRRP in the area of a command post closed by one of the squadrons, particularly if the command post was near the Cambodian border.

Observation: Small bands of Viet Cong would move to the abandoned command post location to collect items of value and to plant mines in the area to hinder US units which might return to the old location. Toward the close of Operation FALGOW, the enemy was more reluctant to explore recently evacuated command posts.

- (2) Item: Daylight ambush patrols around armor laager positions.

Discussion: The 3rd Squadron was successful in ambushing Viet Cong forces by establishing platoon laager positions and setting up daytime dismounted ambush patrols in the surrounding area.

Observation: The Viet Cong soon learn the location of tracked vehicles in an area and tend to move around or approach the position without expecting dismounted elements in the surrounding area.

c. Aerial Operations:

- (1) Item: Deceptiveness of aerial reconnaissance in the jungle.

Discussion: Although the aerial observer is of high value to ground forces in jungle operations, he has certain limitations with regard to assisting ground movement. Even when flying at treetop level, it was learned that the aerial observer could not correctly estimate the height or density of trees and grass. Even more important is the inability to correctly judge soil trafficability from the air. On several occasions, ground commanders have been directed by the aerial observer to apparently accessible areas, only to discover that the ground was too soft to support armored vehicles.

Observation: The aerial observer can be of

great navigational assistance to the ground commander in the jungle; however, only ground reconnaissance can determine the trafficability of the terrain and the density of the foliage.

d. Civic Affairs:

(1) Item: Advance coordination for route clearing and the location of command and logistical elements on private property.

Discussion: Whenever the security of an operation permits, advance coordination should be made for route clearing and the location of command and logistical elements on private property. About ten days is necessary to coordinate the cutting of vegetation (mostly trees with an economic value) on private property. Two or three days advance coordination is desirable for unit locations on private property.

Observation: While advance coordination would have aided substantially in minimizing problems of route clearing and location of tactical units on private property, the threat of mines and booby traps and the compromise of the regiment's arrival and mission in the Loc Ninh area made such advance coordination unwise during Operation FARGO.

Annex A - Task Organization

Annex-B---Op-Overlay-----Withdrawn, Hqs, DA

ANNEX A

Task Organization

1st Squadron

1st Platoon, 919th Engr

2nd Squadron

3rd Platoon, 919th Engr

3rd Squadron

2nd Platoon, 919th Engr

Air Cavalry Troop

Regimental Control

Hq Trp, 11th ACR

46th Set Dog Plat

919th Engr Co (-)

33rd Cml Det

409th RR Det

541st MI Det

17th PI Det

28th MH Det

37th Med Co

398 Trans Det (CHM)

11th TACP

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